

Message Text

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AF/C:MGALLAGHER

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R 032203Z AUG 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ACCRA

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652:N/C

TAGS:ELAB, OAU, SL

SUBJECT:WITHDRAWAL OF SIERRA LEONE LABOR CONGRESS FROM
ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN TRADE UNION UNITY

1, EMBASSY FREETOWN REPORTS THAT SIERRA LEONE LABOR
CONGRESS (SLLC) HAS APPARENTLY DECIDED TO WITHDRAW FROM
ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN TRADE UNION UNITY (OATUU). SLLC
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ACTION IS IN RESPONSE TO OATUU DENIAL AT TRIPOLI CONFERENCE

OF SLLC RIGHT TO VOTE AND TO CONTEST FOR ANY SEAT ON EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ON THE BASIS THAT NONE OF THE COUNTRIES WITH PLURAL ORGANIZATIONS WOULD BE FULLY ACCREDITED. SIERRA LEONE HAS TWO COMPETING TRADE UNION CENTRALS.

2. SLLC, WHICH IS AFFILIATE OF INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS (ICFTU), ALSO OBJECTS TO ARTICLE 8 OF OATUU CHARTER WHICH BANS AFFILIATION WITH ALL INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS EXCEPT OATUU.

3. SLLC MAINTAINS THAT OATUU CHARTER AND ACTIONS ARE IN CONTRAVENTION OF ILO CONVENTION ON FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION. IT FURTHER OBJECTS TO WHAT IT CONSIDERS AS THE USURPATION OF SLLC RIGHTS BY OATUU IN NOT ALLOWING SLLC DELEGATION TO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN THE TRIPOLI CONFERENCE. THE

DEMAND THAT AFRICAN UNIONS DISAFFILIATE FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS COULD CONCEIVABLY LEAD TO THE DEMAND THAT THEY ALSO DISAFFILIATE FROM INTERNATIONAL TRADE SECRETARIATS (ITS), A STEP WHICH THE SLLC CONSIDERS WOULD HAVE SEVERE CONSEQUENCES FOR INDIVIDUAL AFRICAN UNIONS.

4. COMMENT: SLLC IS FIRST EXAMPLE OF OPEN OPPOSITION TO OATUU PRETENSION AT BEING SOLE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION TO WHICH AFRICAN UNIONS MAY BELONG AND TO SUGGESTION THAT OAU GOVERNMENTS ACTIVELY FOSTER SUCH DISAFFILIATION. WHILE IT IS LIKELY THAT THE SLLC WILL BE ATTACKED FOR ITS "NON-SOLIDARISTIC" POSITION, IT IS ALSO PROBABLE THAT OTHER LEADERS IN SOME OF THE LESS RADICAL UNIONS SUCH AS KENYA, SENEGAL, ZAMBIA, IVORY COAST MAY SHARE AT LEAST SOME OF SLLC'S VIEWS, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO ITS. ASSUMING THAT SLLC HAS DEPOSITED FORMAL NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL, WOULD BE INTERESTED IN A) REACTION OF OATUU OFFICIALS, PARTICULARLY THAT OF OATUU SEC GEN DENNIS AKUMU, B) REACTION AMONG GENERAL COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENTLY MEETING IN ACCRA, INCLUDING SLLC GEN SEC GEORGE PALMER IF PRESENT, AND C) REACTION OF TRADE UNION LEADERS AT OTHER AFRICAN ADDRESSEES. KISSINGER

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